

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested. Claims 1-36, 42-45, 52, and 53 are currently pending in this application.

Entry of this Response Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116

The July 18, 2003 Office Action rejected claims 40, 41, and 49-51. Applicant notes with appreciation that the remainder of the claims have been allowed. In the present Response, the rejected claims have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. (Further, allowed dependent claims 37-39 and 46-48 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer; subject matter related to these cancelled dependent claims is being pursued in commonly assigned co-pending applications.) In view of these amendments, this Response is believed to advance this application toward allowance by removing issues in this application. Accordingly, entry of this Response is deemed appropriate and is respectfully requested.

Acknowledgement of June 24, 2003 Information Disclosure Statement

An Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) was submitted on June 24, 2003. There is presently no indication that the Patent Office has considered that IDS. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to indicate consideration of the June 24, 2003 IDS by initialing the Form PTO-1449 submitted with that IDS, and returning the initialed Form to the Applicant.

Formal Drawings

Formal drawings accompany this Response. The Patent Office is respectfully requested to consider the submitted formal drawings, and notify the Applicant of any assessed deficiencies in connection therewith.

Withdrawal of the Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 40, 41, 49, and 50 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,343,250 to Iwamura. Also, claim 51 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,243,137 to Aihara. In this Response, claims 40, 41, and 49-51 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, the rejection of these claims is moot; on this basis, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. 102 rejections is appropriate and is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

All objections and rejections raised in the Office Action having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and such allowance is respectfully solicited. The Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned if any issues remain unresolved by this Amendment.

Respectfully Submitted,

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